Amendments to the Claims

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A method for verifying an availability of a server comprising:

transmitting an availability request by a first client to the server;

the first client receiving a response to the availability request;

the first client transmitting a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients; and

preventing transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least a prescribable period of time.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the method is used for verifying availability of the server in a packet-oriented communication network.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein data is transmitted between the server and the first client and the predefinable other clients by a connectionless switching control.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is transmitted by the first client to the plurality of predefinable other clients using a multicast message.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the first client sends a message regarding an availability of the server to only the plurality of predefinable other clients within a same subnetwork.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the first client executes the availability request at a time which is predefined by a first timer.

15. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein a ~~the~~ first timer is reset to a predefinable value after the response to the availability request is received by the first client.

16. (Previously Presented) A control program loaded into a random access memory of a client and having code comprising:

a first code portion configured to cause the client to transmit an availability request to a server;

a second code portion configured to cause the client to monitor for a receipt of a confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available; and

a third code portion configured to cause the client to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server configured to prevent a transmission of availability requests by the predefinable other clients to the server for a predefinable period of time.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) A client of a communication network comprising:

a first device configured to transmit an availability request to a server;

a second device configured to monitor for receipt of a response comprising a confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available;

a third device configured to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server configured to prevent a transmission of an availability request by any of the predefinable other clients to the server for a predefinable period of time if the confirmation message responding to the availability request is detected by the second device.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client checking to determine whether the server is at least able to respond to the availability request with an unavailability message if no confirmation message is received by the first client.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is ~~further comprising the first client transmitting~~ a negative availability message ~~to the predefinable other clients~~ if the server provided an unavailability message or if the server did not respond to the availability request within the third ~~a~~ predetermined period ~~amount~~ of time after the availability request was sent to the server.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client receiving keep alive data from the predefinable other clients.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising one of the predefinable other clients transmitting a collective availability request to the server if no multicast collective request has been received by that client within a predefined time period.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client storing keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

24. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to monitor for receipt of a message from one of the predefinable other clients regarding availability of the server.

25. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to store keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

26. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is a negative multicast availability message if an availability message is not received from the server within a predetermined time period after the availability request is sent to the server.

27. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the first device is also the third device and the first device is a transmitter or a transmission mechanism.

28. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the first device, second device and third device are interconnected portions of the client.

29. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to monitor for reception of a message from a prescribable further client about server availability and also configured to prevent transmission of an availability request to the server at least for a prescribable time interval after receipt of message.

30. (New) A method for verifying an availability of a server comprising:

checking for a receipt of a message regarding a transmission of a server keepalive test by a first client within a first predetermined period of time;

if no message regarding the transmission of the keepalive test is received by the first client within the first predetermined period of time, the first client transmitting a message regarding a collective request to a plurality of predefineable other clients;

transmitting an availability request by the first client to the server, the availability request to the server comprising data of the predefineable other clients that responded to the message regarding the collective requests within a second predetermined period of time;

preventing transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least a prescribable period of time;

after a third predetermined period of time or after receipt of a response to the availability request sent to the server, the first client transmitting a message regarding an availability of the server to the predefinable other clients that responded to the message regarding the collective requests within the second predetermined period of time.

31. (New) The method as claimed in claim 30 further comprising the first client checking for responses to the message regarding the collective request from the predefineable other clients within the second predetermined period of time.

32. (New) The method as claimed in claim 30 wherein the message regarding a transmission of a server keepalive test is a multicast collective request from a client that intends to directly send a keepalive request to the server.

33. (New) The method of claim 30 wherein the preventing of the transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least a prescribable period of time is comprised of the predefineable other clients that responded to message regarding the collective requests within the second predetermined period of time checking whether the message regarding an availability of the server is received from the first client within a fourth predetermined period of time.